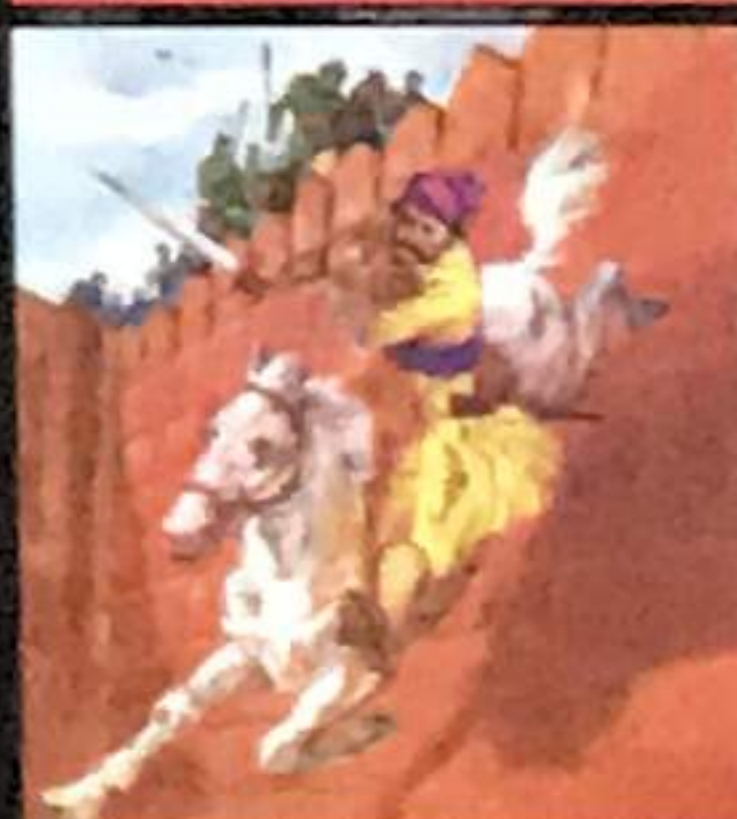


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OTHER ACK BRAVEHEARTS:

AMAR SINGH RATHOR



BAPPA RAWAL



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RANA PRATAP



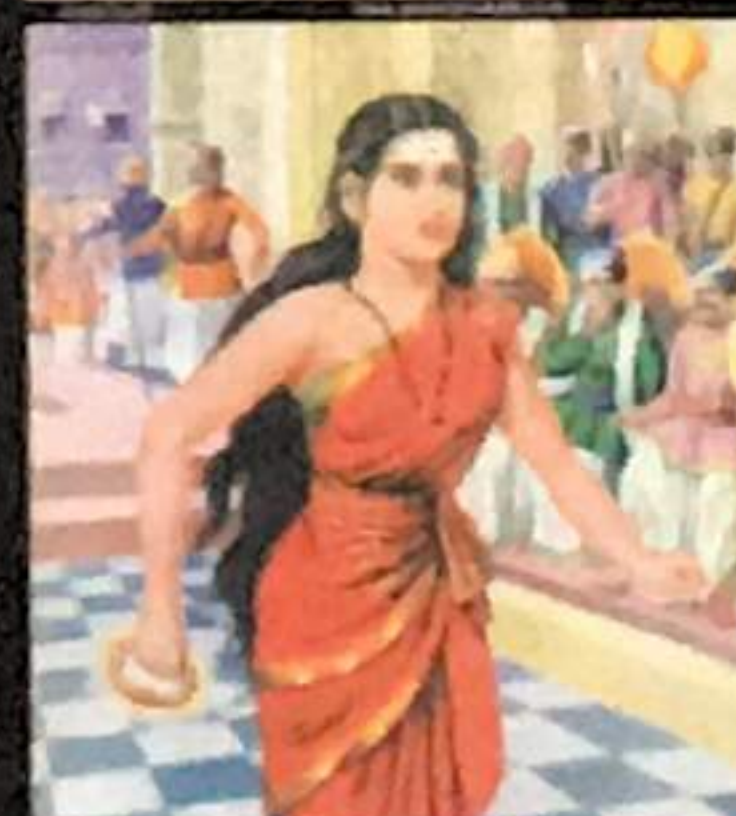
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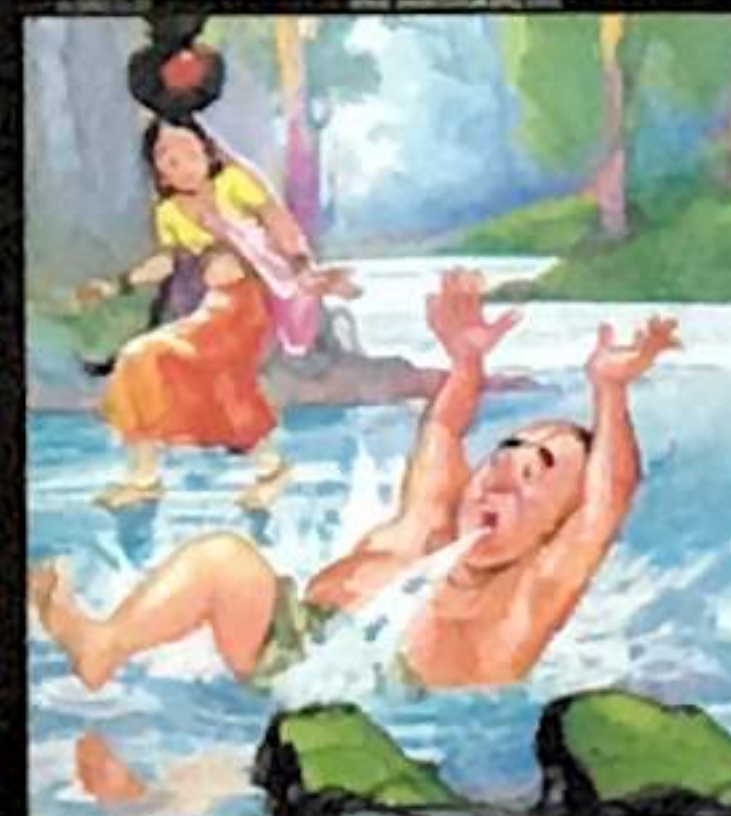
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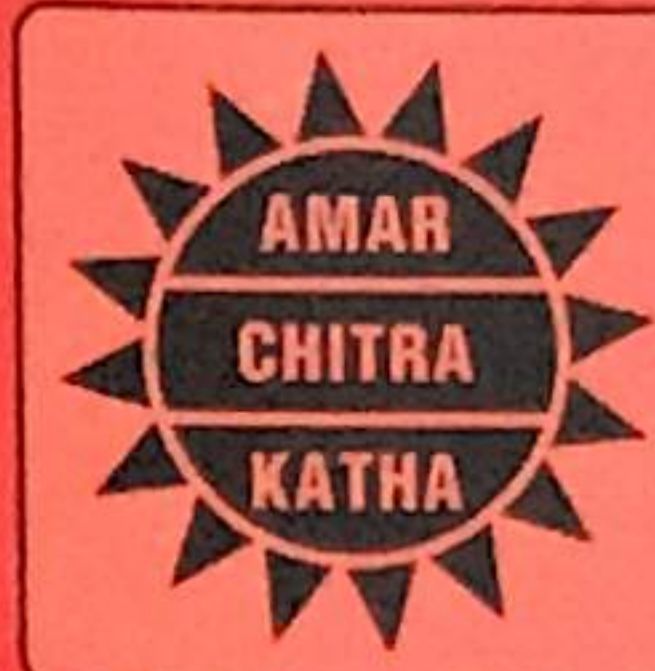
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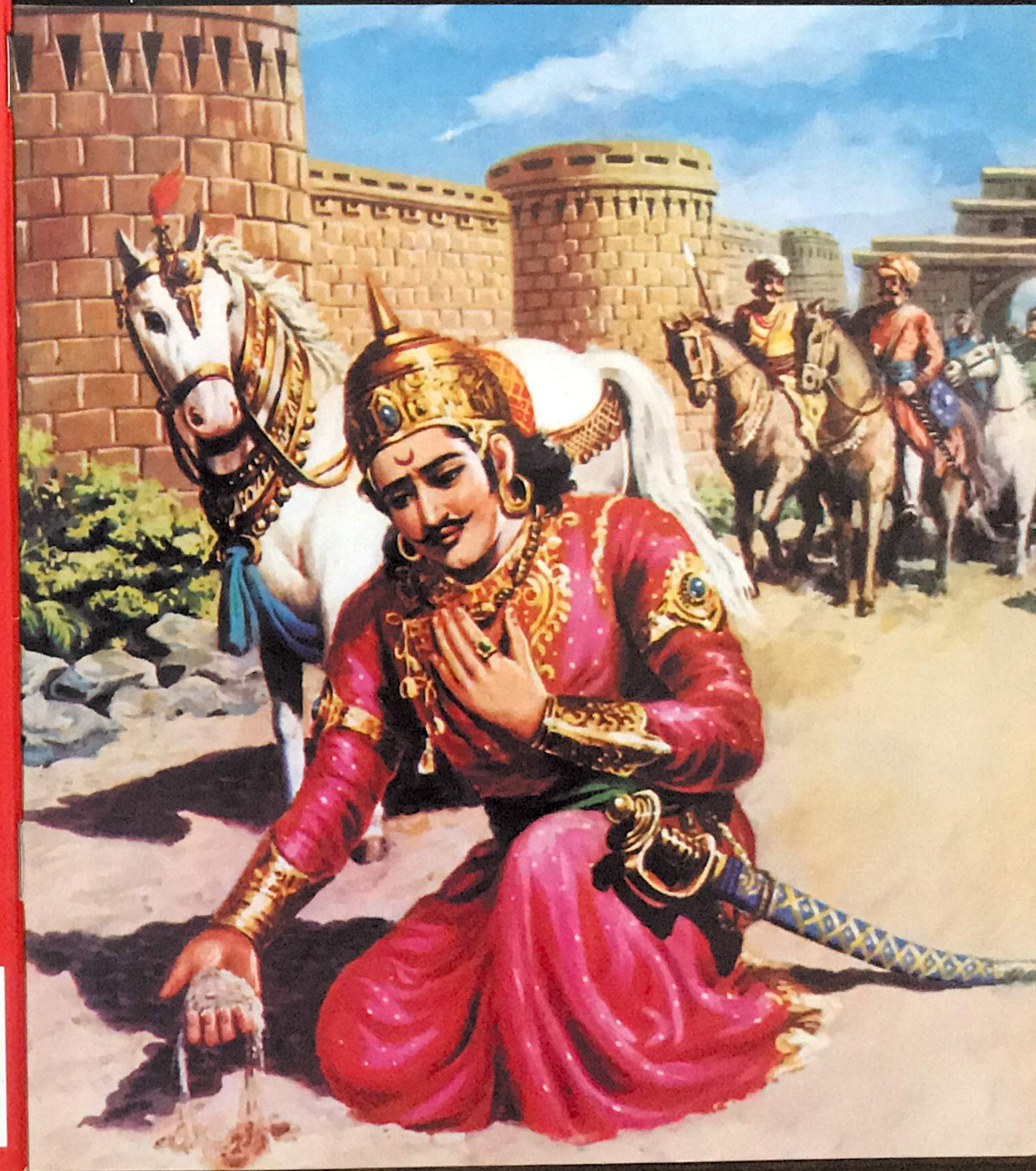
BRAVEHEARTS



VEER HAMMIR

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VEER HAMMIR



ARI SINGH WAS THE ELDEST SON OF LAXMAN SINGH, THE RANA OF MEWAR. HE WAS FOND OF HUNTING. ONE DAY, IN THE ANDAVA FOREST —



THERE IT GOES!

FOLLOW IT!

AS THEY RODE INTO THE FIELD —

STOP! YOU ARE RUINING MY CROPS.

BUT THE BOAR — HOW ARE WE TO KILL IT WITHOUT ENTERING THE FIELD?



WITHOUT UTTERING A WORD, THE GIRL UPROOTED A STALK OF MAIZE.



SHE MOUNTED THE PLATFORM, AIMED THE POINTED END OF THE STALK AT THE HOG...



... AND IMPALED IT.

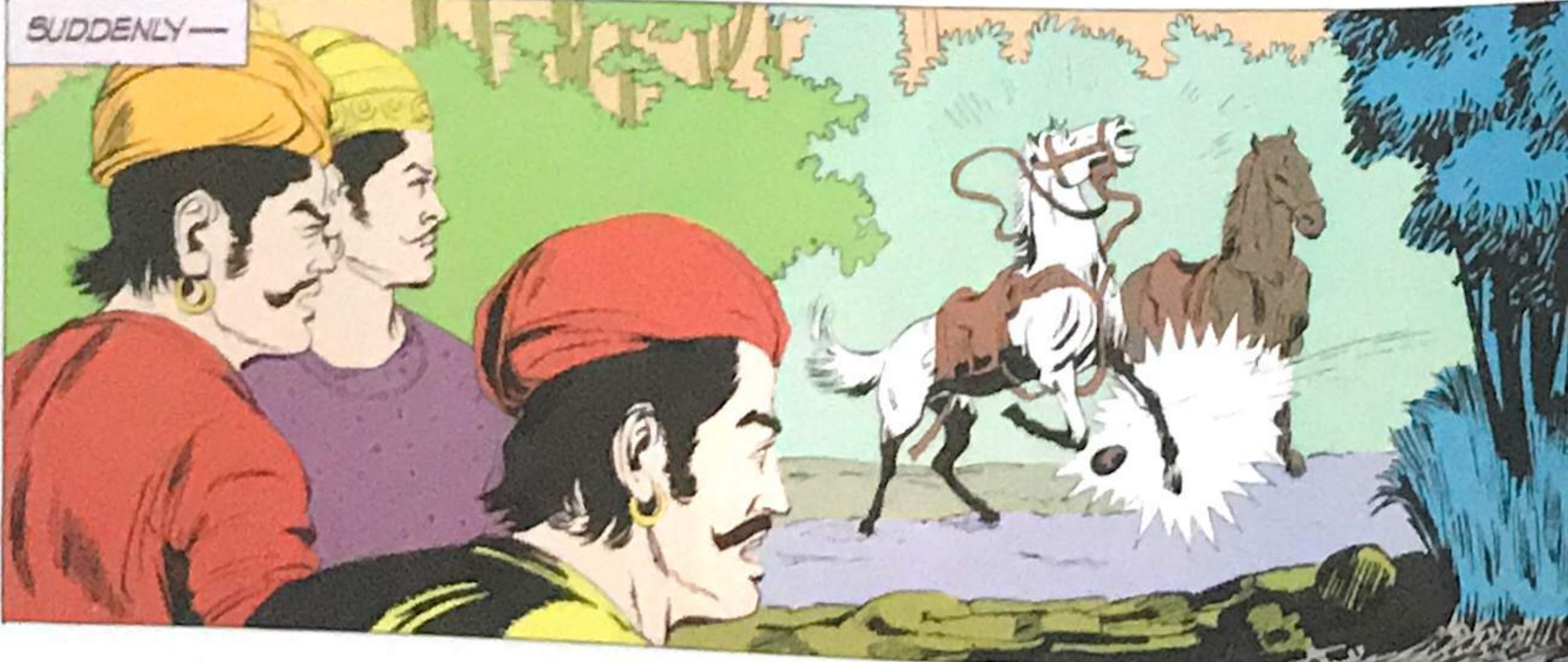
SHE THEN DRAGGED THE HOG TO ARI SINGH.



THE GIRL WENT AWAY; BUT ARI SINGH COULD NOT FORGET HER.



SUDDENLY—



JUST THEN —

I AM THE CULPRIT. FORGIVE ME. THAT STONE WAS FLUNG TO DRIVE AWAY THE BIRDS.



ARI SINGH SPENT THAT NIGHT THINKING OF THE BEAUTIFUL PEASANT GIRL.



THE NEXT MORNING —

LOOK! THAT GIRL AGAIN!

LET'S FRIGHTEN THE BUFFALOES. SHE'LL LOSE HER BALANCE...

...AND DROP THE MILK-POT. HA! HA! HA!



THEY CHARGED AT THE BUFFALOES. BUT AS THEY NEARED HER...



...THE GIRL FLUNG OUT THE ROPE BY WHICH SHE HELD A BUFFALO...



...AND BROUGHT ONE OF THE RIDERS DOWN.



ARI SINGH, WHO HAD OBSERVED THE WHOLE INCIDENT, WENT TO HER FATHER WITH A PROPOSAL. A FEW DAYS LATER THEY WERE MARRIED.



WHEN A SON WAS BORN TO THEM —



LET US NAME HIM HAMMIR.

A FEW MONTHS LATER, CHITTOR WAS ATTACKED BY THE FORCES OF ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI, THE SULTAN OF DELHI. ARI SINGH'S FATHER, LAXMAN SINGH, SENT FOR HIS COURTIER AND HIS TWELVE SONS.



WE MUST DRIVE OUT THE INVADERS.

FATHER! LET ME RIDE OUT TO FACE THEM. I AM YOUR ELDEST SON; GIVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE MY BELOVED MOTHERLAND.

NO, ARI! WE WILL ALL GO TOGETHER

I CANNOT LET ALL OF YOU GO. LET OUR PRINCES COMMAND THE ARMY ONE BY ONE.

BEING THE ELDEST SON, ARI SINGH WAS THE FIRST TO GO.

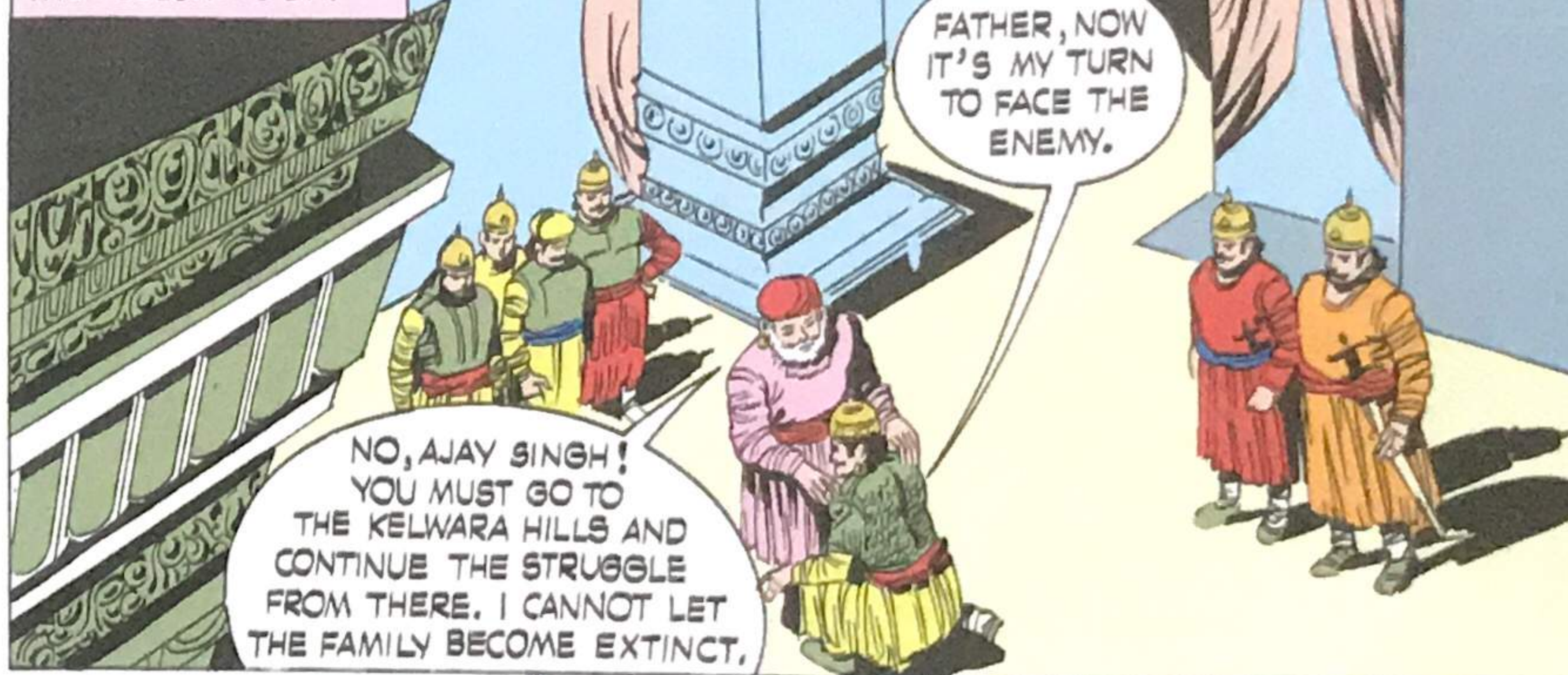


TODAY I GO TO THE BATTLEFIELD; PERHAPS NEVER TO RETURN. MAY GOD PROTECT YOU AND HAMMIR.

ARI SINGH WAS KILLED ON THE BATTLEFIELD.



THE FOLLOWING DAY —



FATHER, NOW IT'S MY TURN TO FACE THE ENEMY.

NO, AJAY SINGH! YOU MUST GO TO THE KELWARA HILLS AND CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE FROM THERE. I CANNOT LET THE FAMILY BECOME EXTINCT.

BUT I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME...



...THAT YOU WILL MAKE ARI'S SON, AND NONE OTHER, THE RULER OF OUR KINGDOM AFTER YOU.

I PROMISE, FATHER! I'LL SEND HAMMIR TO KELWARA IMMEDIATELY.

ONE BY ONE, THE REMAINING TEN PRINCES WERE KILLED IN BATTLE. BEFORE LEAVING FOR THE BATTLEFIELD TO MEET CERTAIN DEATH, LAXMAN SINGH SENT AJAY SINGH TO THE KELWARA HILLS; THE RAJPUT WOMEN COMMITTED JAUHAR.



I WILL RETURN ONLY WHEN CHITTOR IS WON BACK FROM THE ENEMY—WHEN I CAN PLACE HAMMIR ON THE THRONE.

BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED AT KELWARA, HE DID NOT FIND HAMMIR THERE.



THE CROWN PRINCE MUST BE FOUND.

THE YEARS ROLLED BY, BUT THE CROWN PRINCE COULD NOT BE TRACED.



WILL I EVER BE ABLE TO KEEP MY PROMISE TO MY FATHER?



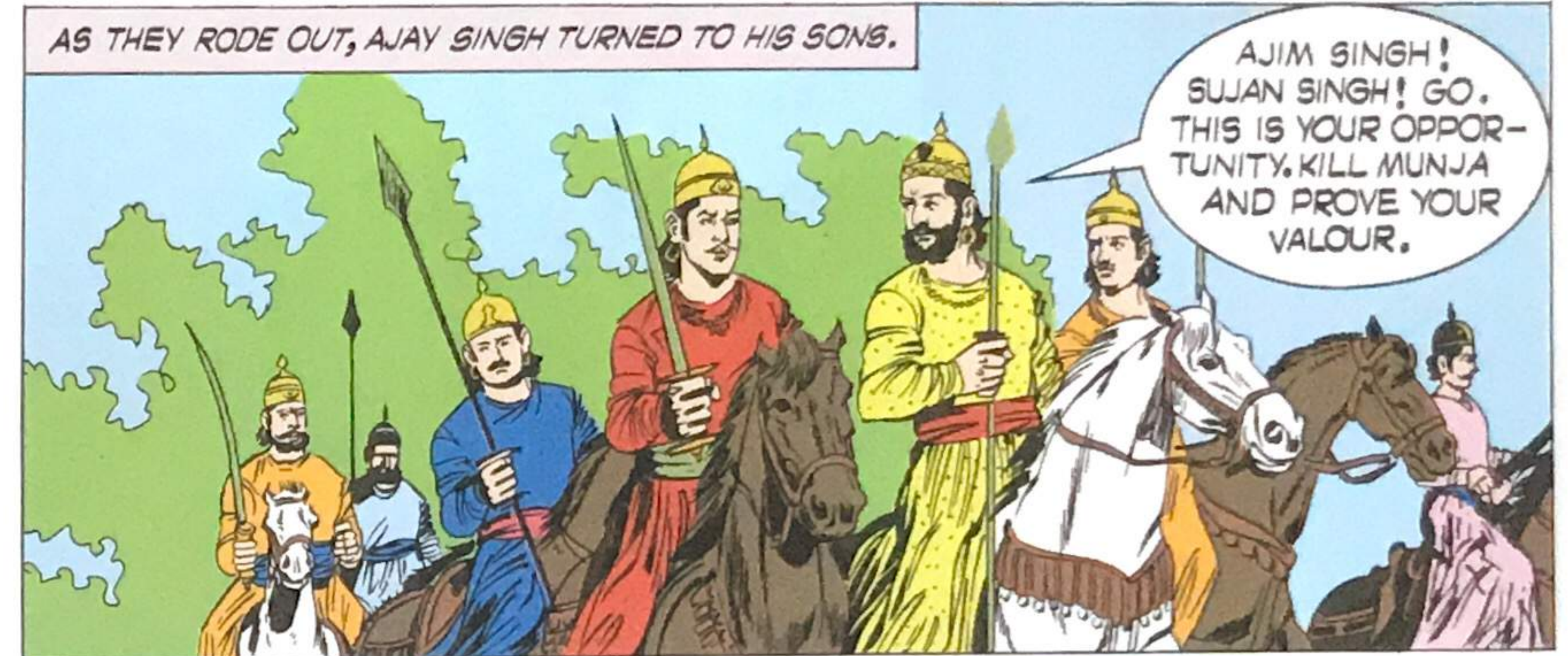
MEANWHILE, ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI HAD MADE THE TRAITOR, MALDEV, THE GOVERNOR OF CHITTOR.

IN THOSE DAYS, THE BHIL CHIEFTAIN, MUNJA, MADE FREQUENT RAIDS ON THE INHABITANTS OF KELWARA.



MUNJA MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON. LET'S GO.

AS THEY RODE OUT, AJAY SINGH TURNED TO HIS SONS.



AJAY SINGH! SUJAN SINGH! GO. THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY. KILL MUNJA AND PROVE YOUR VALOUR.



GIVE US SOME OTHER ASSIGNMENT, FATHER.

TRULY, FATHER, MUNJA HAS THE MIGHT OF A DEVIL.



AJAY SINGH WAS DISGUSTED.

DROWN YOURSELVES, YOU COWARDS! I'LL HANDLE HIM.



THIS TIME YOU SHALL NOT ESCAPE ALIVE.

AJAY SINGH HURLED HIS LANCE AT MUNJA.



A-A-AH! HELP!

MUNJA WAS WOUNDED BUT HE MANAGED TO ESCAPE.

HE SOON RECOVERED, HOWEVER, AND BECAME AN EVEN GREATER MENACE. ONE DAY, WHILE AJAY SINGH AND HIS COUNCILLORS WERE DISCUSSING THE MATTER, AN ATTENDANT WALKED IN.

SIR, WE HAVE LOCATED HAMMIR!

YOU HAVE!



WHERE?



IN A JUNGLE HIDEOUT, HIS MATERNAL GRAND-FATHER HAD TAKEN HIM THERE TO ENSURE HIS SAFETY.

AJAY SINGH TURNED TO HIS MINISTER.



ARRANGE TO HAVE HIM BROUGHT HERE, AT ONCE.

AT YOUR COMMAND, SIR.



SUJAN SINGH HOWEVER DID NOT SHARE HIS FATHER'S JOY.



AJIM, IF HAMMIR COMES TO MEWAR, HE WILL SUCCEED TO THE THRONE.



DON'T WORRY, SUJAN.



HE WON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO DO SO.



WE'LL SUGGEST THAT HAMMIR BE SENT TO QUELL MUNJA.



HAMMIR IS ONLY TWELVE YEARS OLD. MUNJA WILL KILL HIM.

YOU ARE CLEVER, AJIM!



THEY WENT TO AJAY SINGH.

FATHER, WOULDN'T IT BE UNWISE TO PLACE HAMMIR ON THE THRONE WITHOUT TESTING HIS VALOUR?

YES. WHAT IF HE TURNS OUT TO BE A COWARD?



THE TEST SHOULD BE A HARD ONE!



WHAT ABOUT MUNJA? IF HAMMIR DEFEATS HIM WE WILL HAVE A STRONG KING.

AND WE WILL BE RID OF THE THORN THAT IS MUNJA.

ALL RIGHT. HAMMIR SHALL FIGHT MUNJA.

WHEN HAMMIR PRESENTED HIMSELF AT COURT, AJAY SINGH GAVE HIM A WARM WELCOME.



THE HONOUR OF OUR FAMILY IS NOW IN YOUR HANDS, HAMMIR.

I WILL NEVER LET THE GLORY OF OUR ANCESTORS BE SULLIED!



THEN BRING ME THE HEAD OF MUNJA, THE BHIL CHIEFTAIN!

IS THAT ALL?



I VOW THAT I WILL NOT RETURN WITHOUT THE HEAD OF MUNJA.

HAMMIR AND MUNJA MET. IT WAS A TERRIBLE FIGHT.

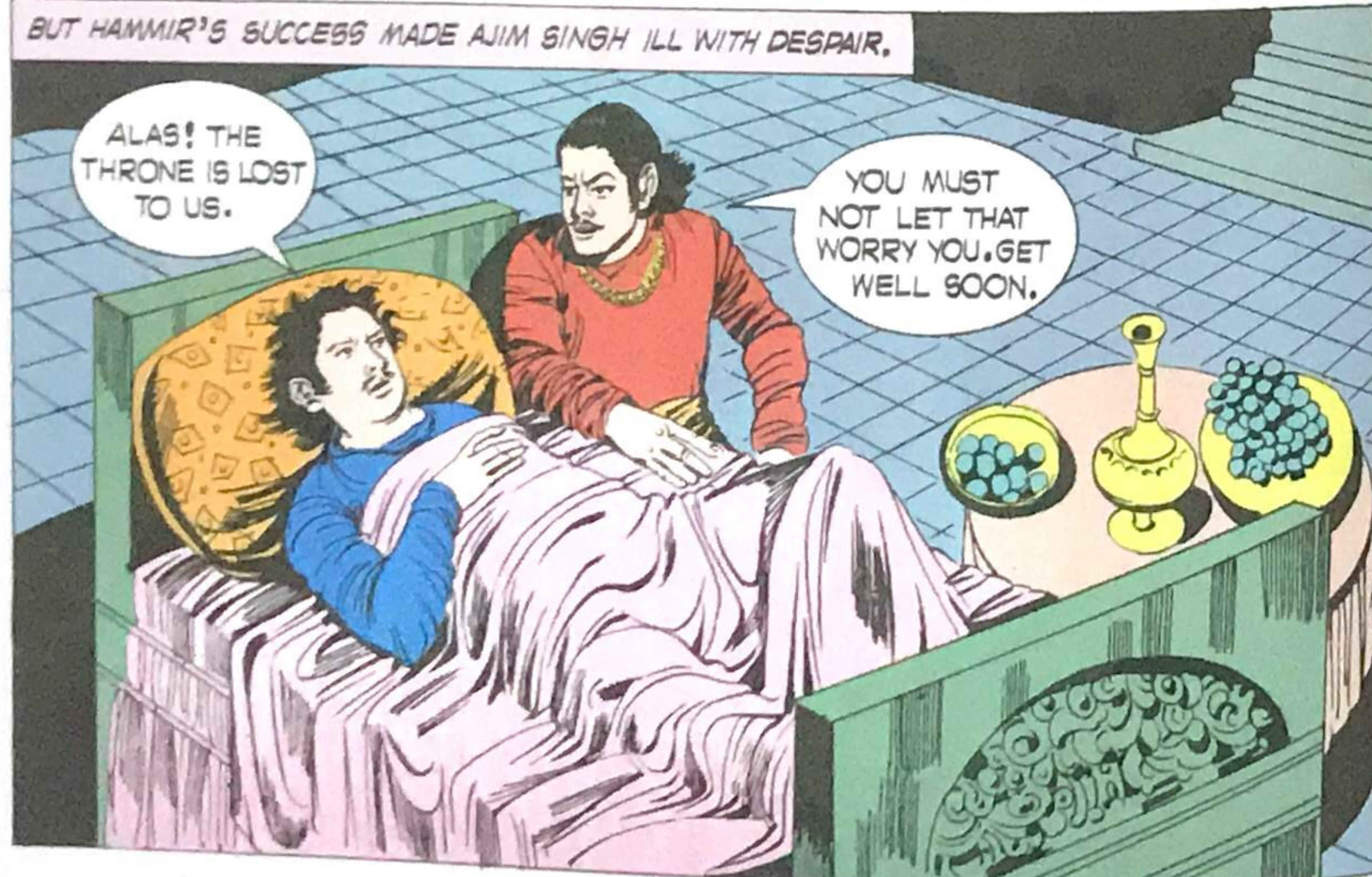


HAMMIR RETURNED VICTORIOUS. AJAY SINGH WAS PLEASED.



YOU WILL BE ANOINTED KING WITH MUNJA'S BLOOD.

BUT HAMMIR'S SUCCESS MADE AJIM SINGH ILL WITH DESPAIR.



ALAS! THE THRONE IS LOST TO US.

YOU MUST NOT LET THAT WORRY YOU. GET WELL SOON.

BUT AJIM SINGH NEVER RECOVERED.



I VOW THAT I WILL NEVER LET HAMMIR REIGN IN THIS LAND.

AJAY SINGH WAS ANGRY WHEN HE HEARD SUJAN SINGH'S WORDS.



IF I LET YOU REMAIN HERE, YOU ARE BOUND TO CREATE TROUBLE. I ORDER YOU TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

B-BUT I AM YOUR SON!

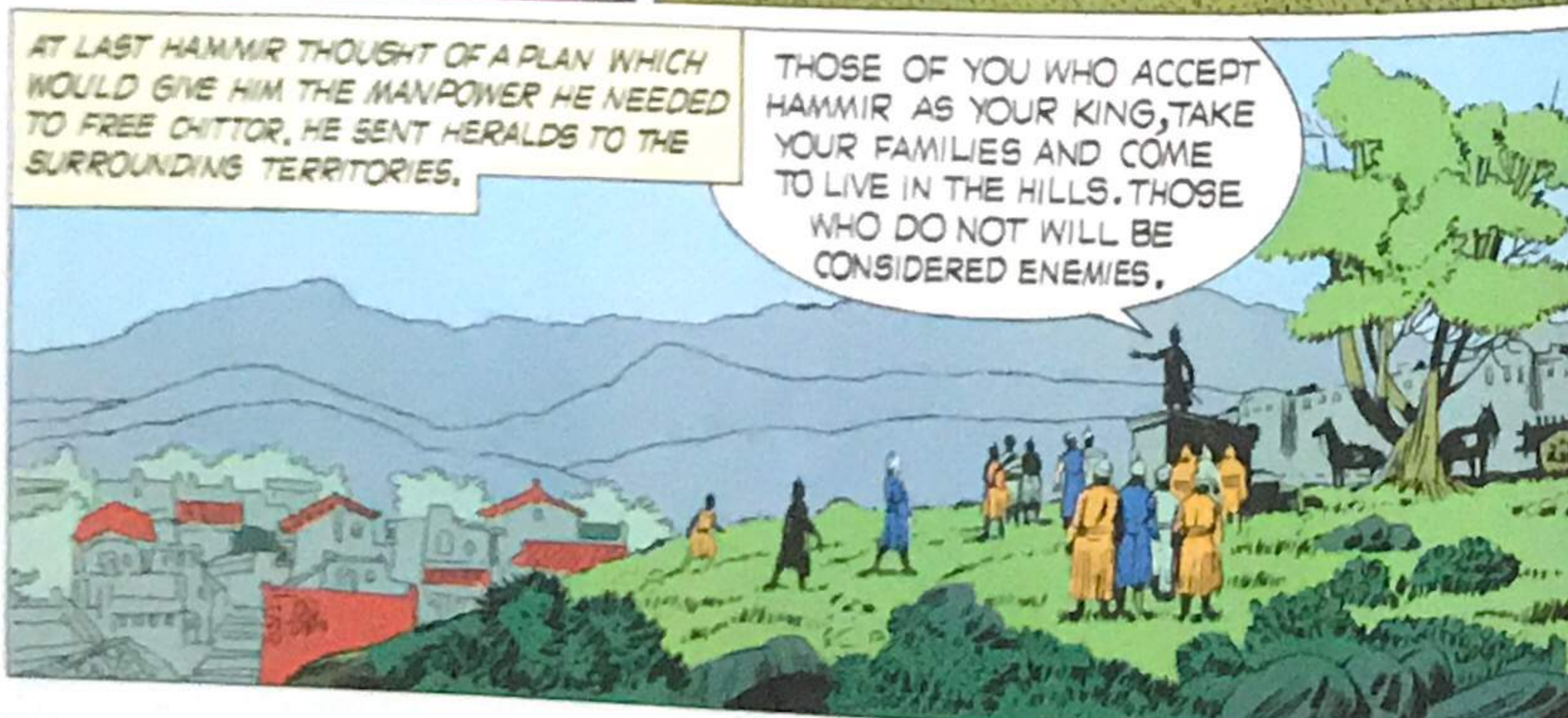
MORE'S THE PITY. GO AWAY. LET ME NOT SET EYES ON YOU EVER AGAIN.



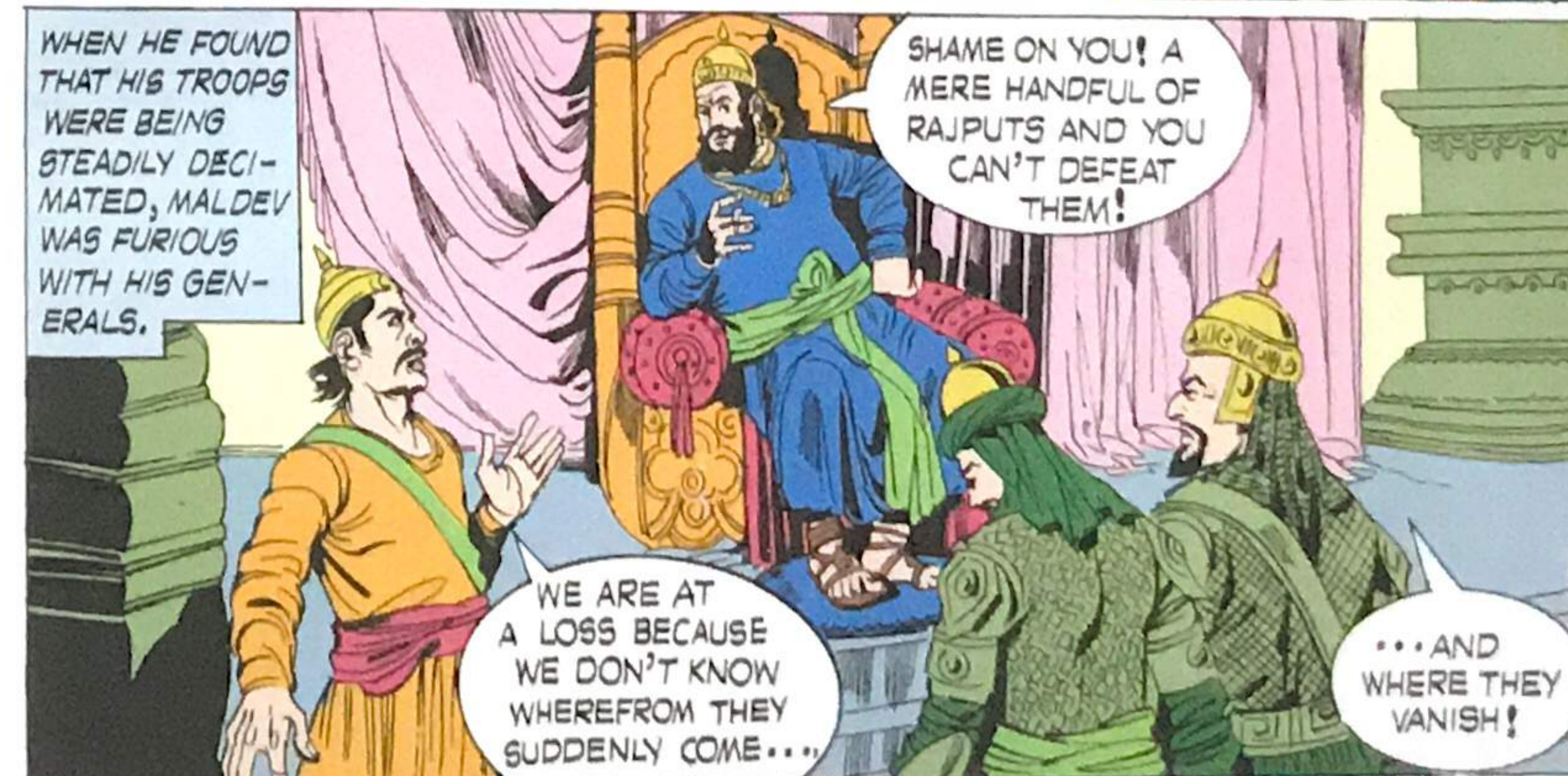
THE TWELVE-YEAR-OLD HAMMIR ASCENDED THE THRONE.

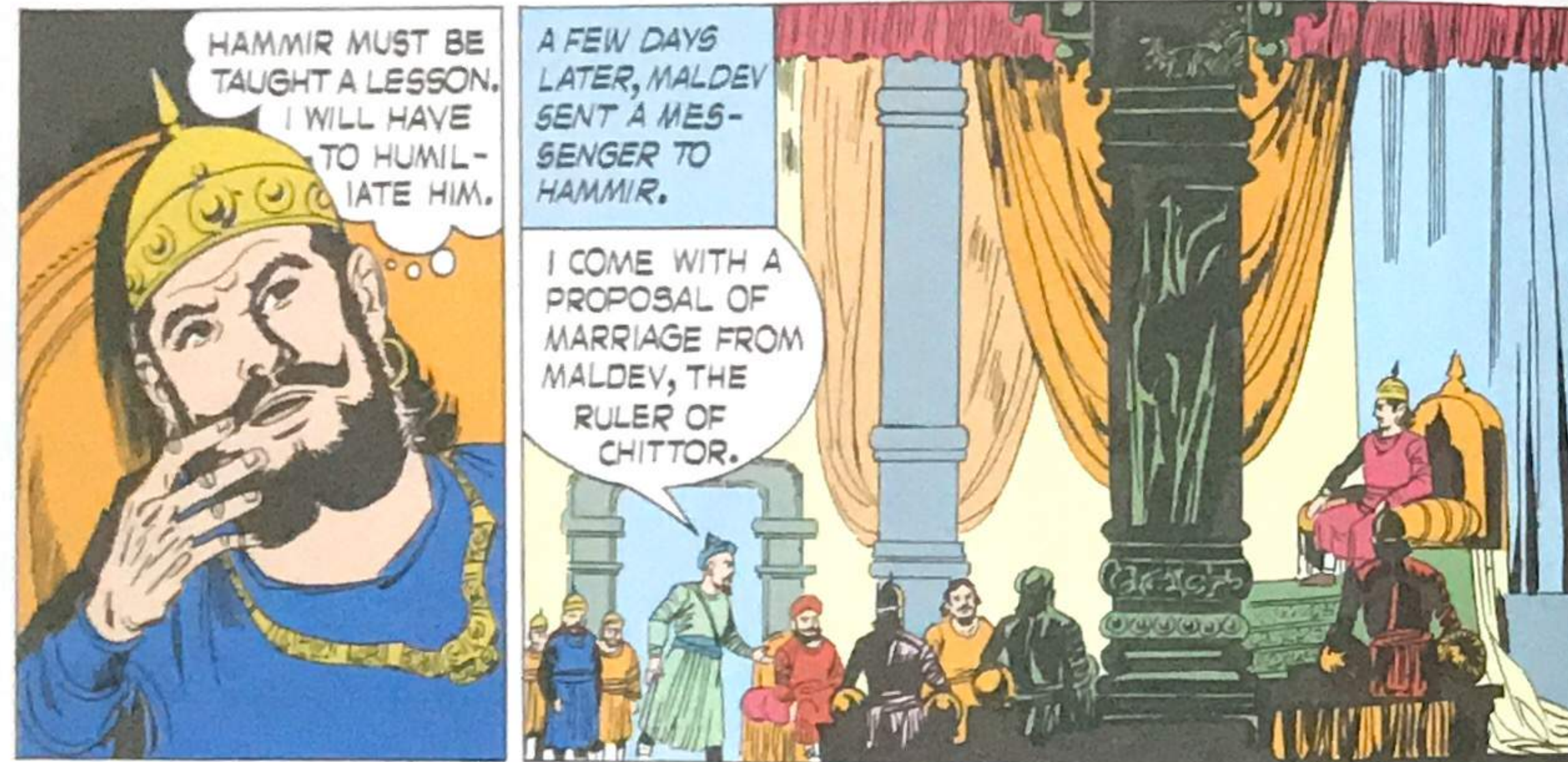


I VOW THAT I WILL NOT SHEATHE MY SWORD TILL I HAVE RESTORED THE LOST GLORY OF CHITTOR, THE LAND OF MY ANCESTORS.



THE ENEMY TROOPS HAD TO PASS THROUGH KELWARA AS THEY MOVED BETWEEN DELHI AND CHITTOR. AND EVERY TIME THEY DID, THEY WERE AMBUSHED.





HAMMIR'S MEN WERE PUZZLED.

WHERE IS MALDEV? WHY ISN'T HE HERE TO RECEIVE THE GROOM?

WHAT A POOR WELCOME FOR OUR KING!



A LITTLE LATER —

THERE! WE'VE REACHED THE CITY GATE!



BUT EVEN HERE THERE SEEMS TO BE NO SIGN OF ANY PREPARATION FOR THE FORMAL WELCOME

THEY BECAME UNEASY.



I WONDER WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?

THIS IS OBVIOUSLY AN INSULT. OUR KING SHOULD PROTEST.

YES. HE MUST.

BUT HAMMIR DID NOT UTTER A WORD, HE WAS LOST IN HIS OWN THOUGHTS.



O SACRED LAND OF MY ANCESTORS, THE VERY SIGHT OF YOU HAS RENDERED ME BLESSED.

THEY RODE ON TOWARDS THE CEREMONIAL ENCLOSURE. THERE WAS NO HUSTLE OR BUSTLE THERE EITHER.



IT MUST BE A TRAP OF SOME SORT. LET US BE ALERT,

WHEN HAMMIR APPEARED, MALDEV SIMPLY PLACED HIS DAUGHTER'S HAND IN HIS. ONLY THEN DID HAMMIR COME DOWN TO EARTH.



IS THAT ALL? WHAT ABOUT THE CEREMONY? THIS IS AN INSULT. BUT I WILL NOT SAY OR DO ANYTHING YET.

I ENTRUST MY DAUGHTER TO YOUR CARE.

HAMMIR'S MEN WERE AMAZED.

WHY DOESN'T HAMMIR PROTEST?
PERHAPS, HE HAS THOUGHT OF SOME STRATEGY.



WHEN THE BRIDE AND GROOM WERE ALONE —

WHY HAVE I BEEN INSULTED IN THIS WAY? TELL ME THE TRUTH.

I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR IT, MY LORD. I AM INNOCENT.



YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE A PRINCESS. IF YOU WERE, YOUR WEDDING WOULD HAVE BEEN PERFORMED WITH ENTHUSIASM AND POMP.



THERE WAS A REASON FOR THAT.

QUICK! LET ME KNOW WHY. OR IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE.

I AM A VERY UNFORTUNATE WOMAN, MY LORD.



TO BE GIVEN A WIDOW FOR A BRIDE WAS THE WORST HUMILIATION THAT COULD BE INFLICTED ON ANY RAJPUT IN THOSE DAYS.

I WILL NOT REST TILL I'VE AVENGED MYSELF.

I WAS NOT WILLING, MY LORD. THEY THREATENED TO HARM ME.



I AM A CHILD WIDOW!

A WIDOW!

HAMMIR RELENDED.

FORGIVE ME. I KNOW THAT YOU ARE BLAMELESS. MALDEV IS THE CULPRIT.

YOU ARE MY ONLY REFUGE NOW, MY LORD.



YOU ARE NOW MY WIFE. AND A WIFE MUST DO ALL SHE CAN TO ENHANCE HER HUSBAND'S STATUS.

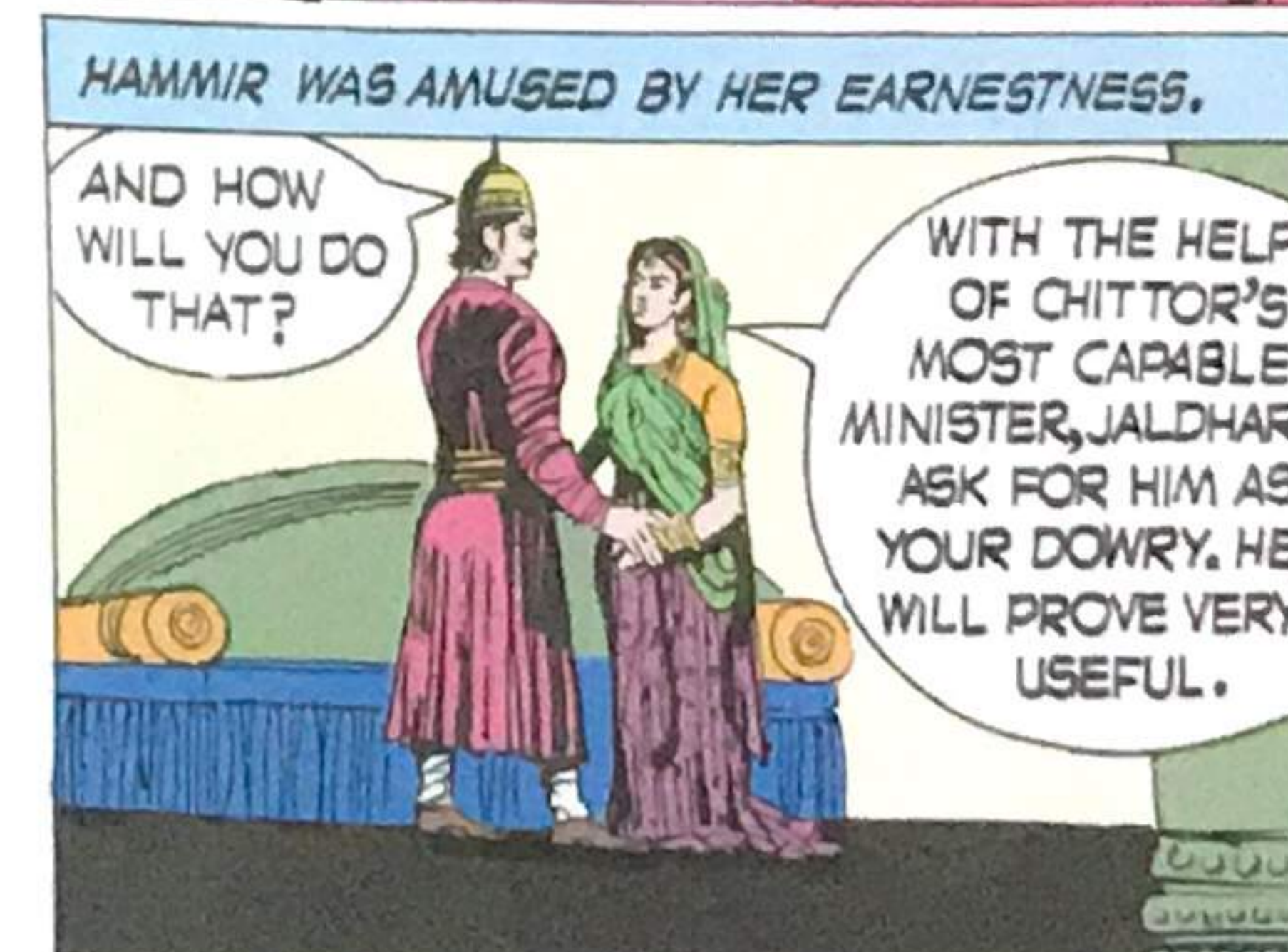
THEN I WILL BEGIN BY AVENGING YOUR INSULT, MY LORD.



HAMMIR WAS AMUSED BY HER EARNESTNESS.

AND HOW WILL YOU DO THAT?

WITH THE HELP OF CHITTOR'S MOST CAPABLE MINISTER, JALDHAR, ASK FOR HIM AS YOUR DOWRY. HE WILL PROVE VERY USEFUL.



IS HE ABSOLUTELY TRUSTWORTHY?

HE IS. BESIDES, HE LOOKS UPON ME AS HIS DAUGHTER.



THE NEXT MORNING, AS THE GROOM'S PARTY WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR KELWARA, MALDEV DREW HIS DAUGHTER ASIDE.

DID HAMMIR SAY ANYTHING TO YOU? DID HE QUESTION YOU? WAS HE ANGRY?

NO, FATHER. HE DIDN'T UTTER A WORD.

MALDEV THEN WENT UP TO HAMMIR.

IF I HAVE OFFENDED YOU IN ANY WAY, PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

YOU ARE EMBARRASSING ME BY YOUR GOODNESS.

YOU HYPOCRITE!



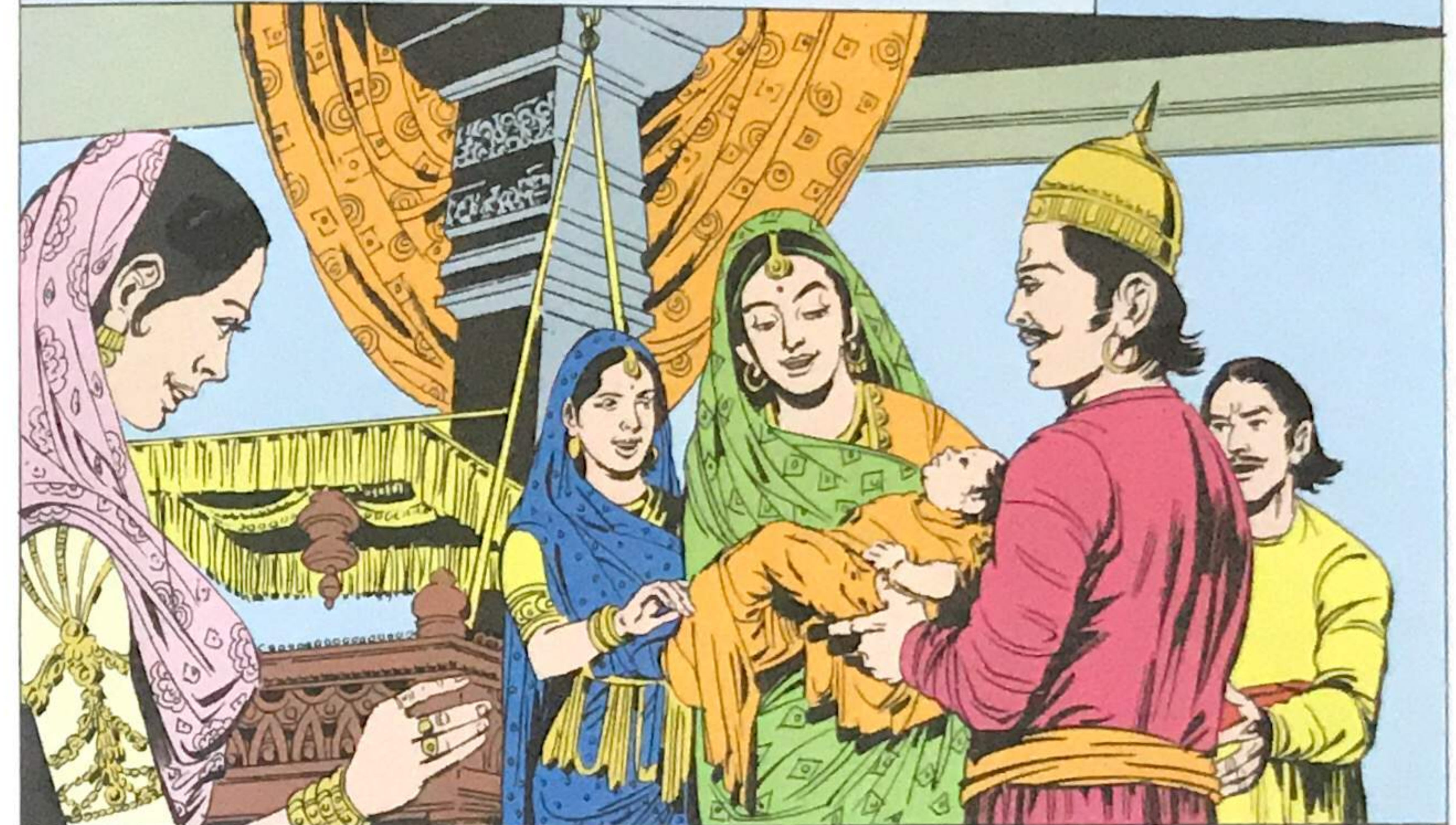
AS FOR THE DOWRY...

YOU SCOUNDREL!

NEVER MIND. I HAVE ONLY ONE REQUEST. LET ME HAVE JALDHAR.

PLEASED TO HAVE GOT OFF SO LIGHTLY, MALDEV READILY AGREED, AND HAMMIR RETURNED TO KELWARA WITH HIS BRIDE AND JALDHAR.

A YEAR LATER, HAMMIR'S WIFE HAD A SON WHO WAS NAMED KSHETRABINGH.



MALDEV WAS SO HAPPY WHEN HE HEARD THE NEWS THAT HE GAVE ALL THE HILL TERRITORIES IN HIS POSSESSION TO HAMMIR.

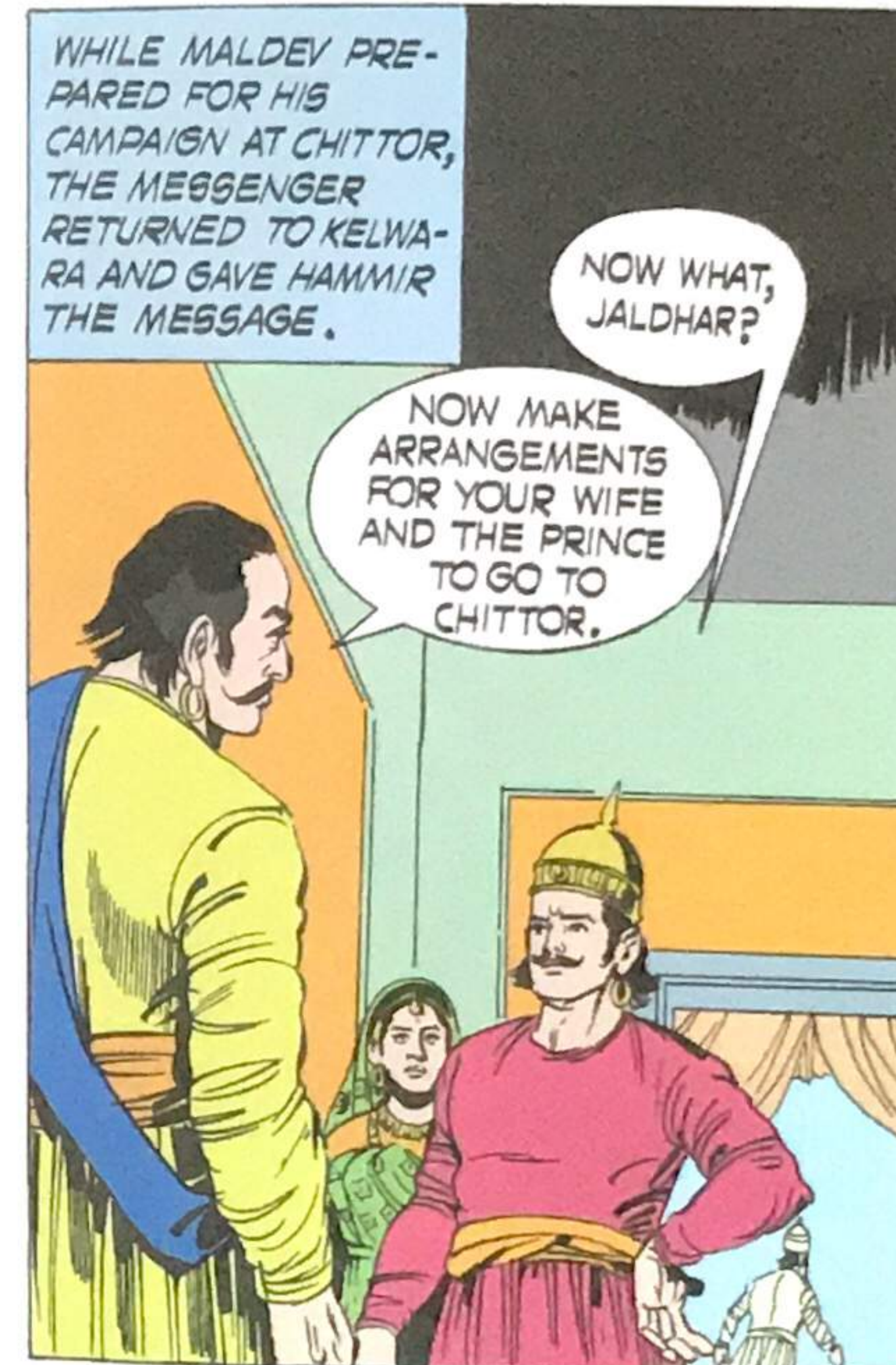
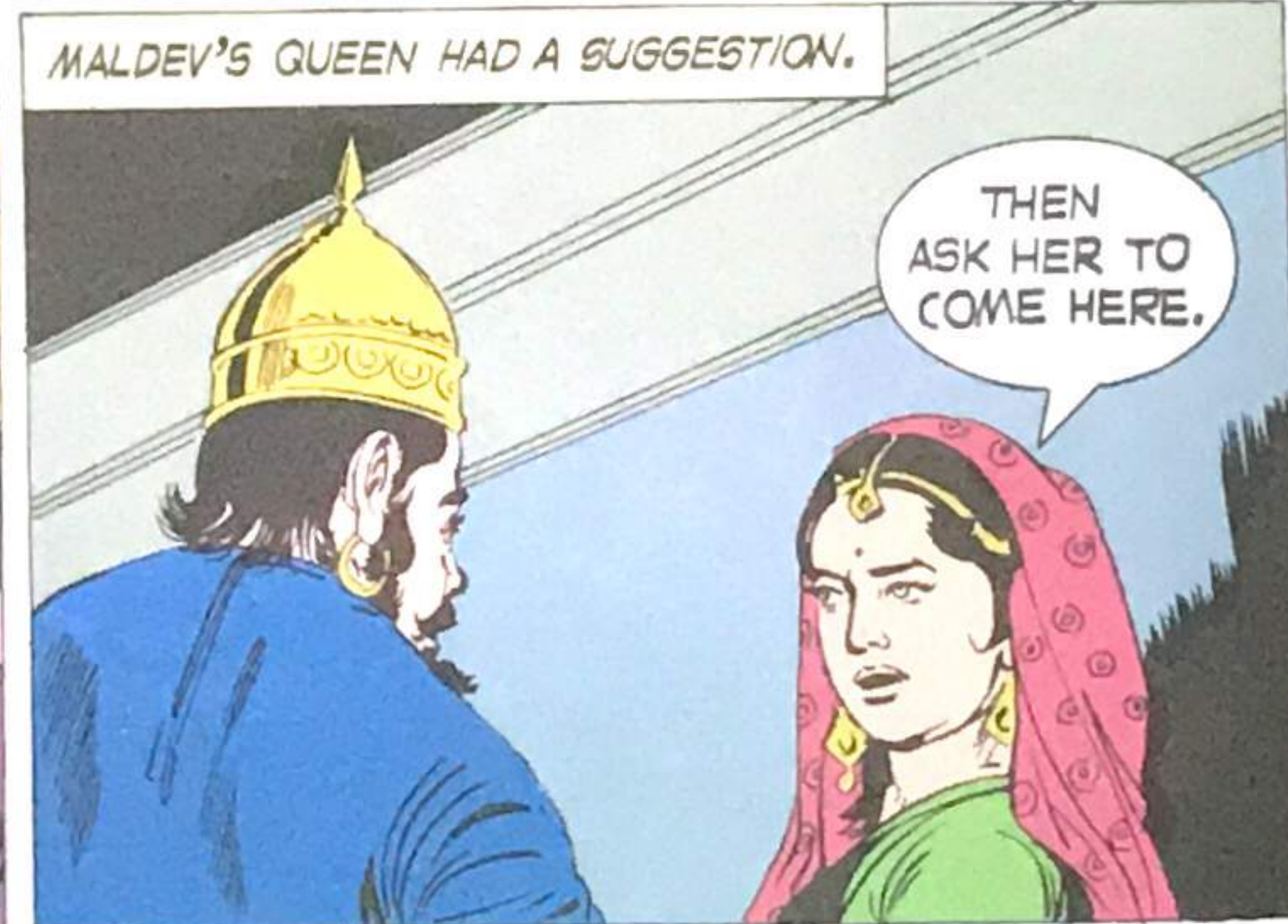
AH! SO I'VE BECOME A GRANDFATHER. SHAMELESS HAMMIR. ANYONE ELSE IN HIS PLACE WOULD HAVE DROWNED HIMSELF.

JUST THEN—

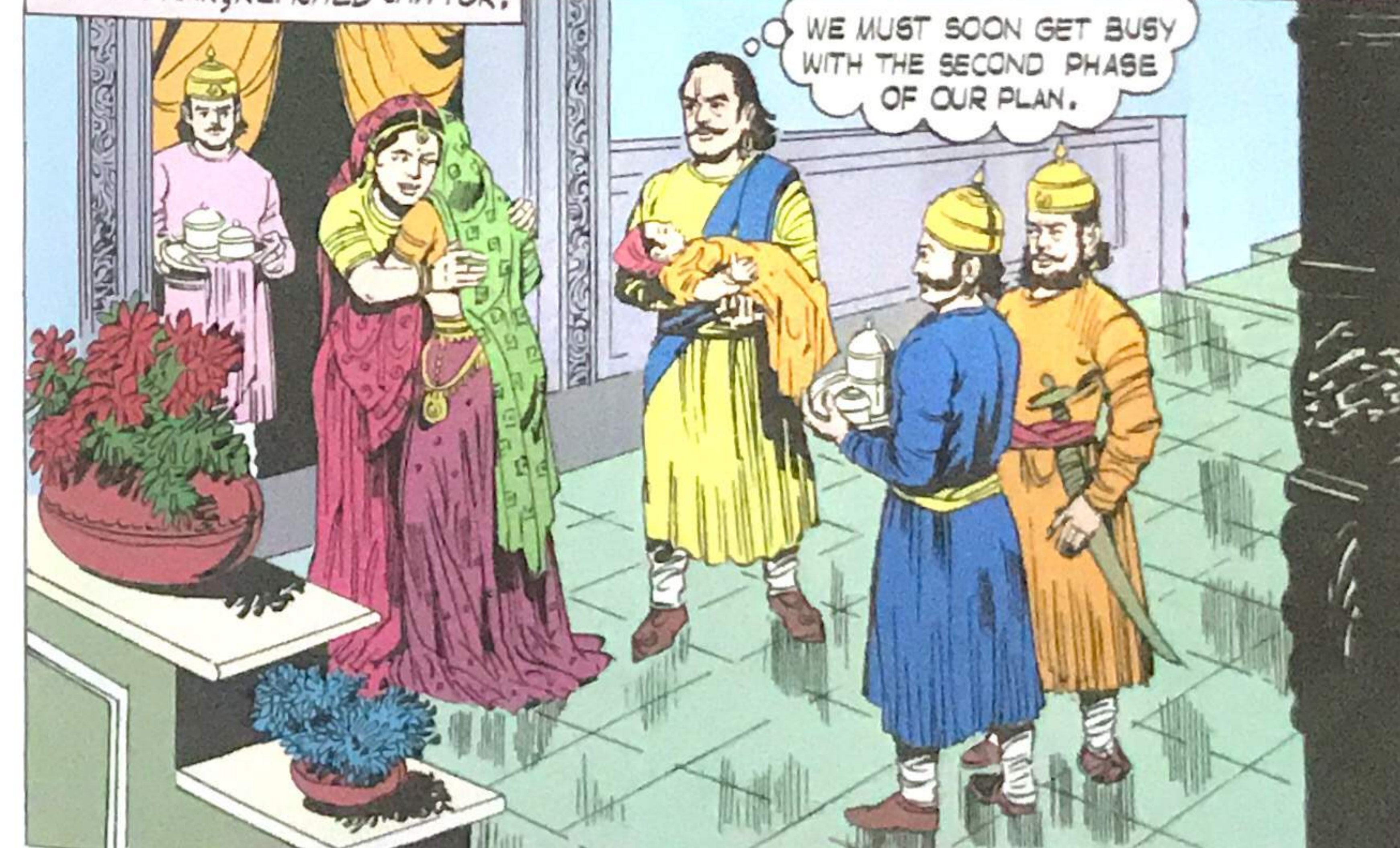
SIR, A MESSENGER FROM KELWARA AWAITS YOUR PLEASURE.

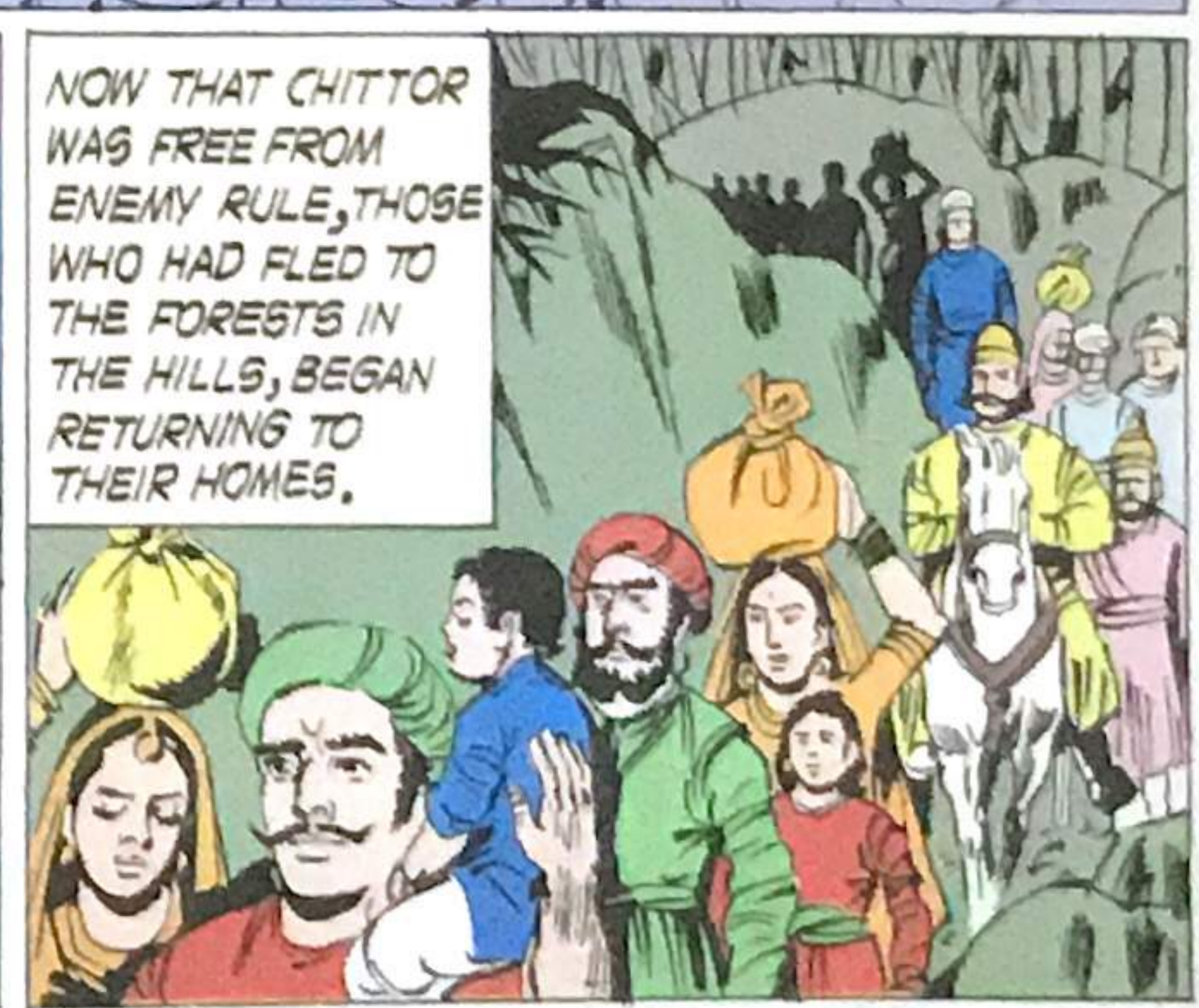
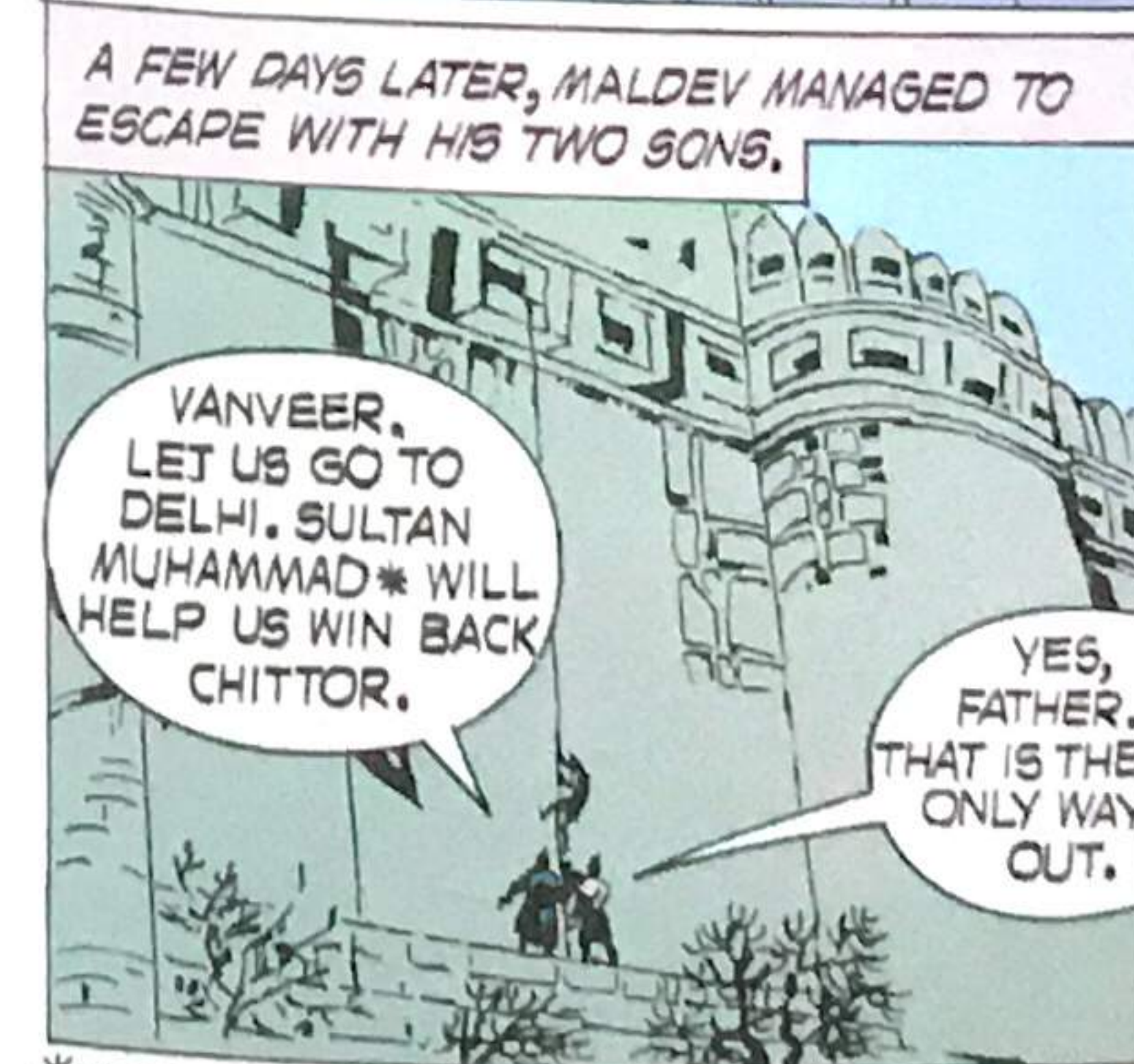
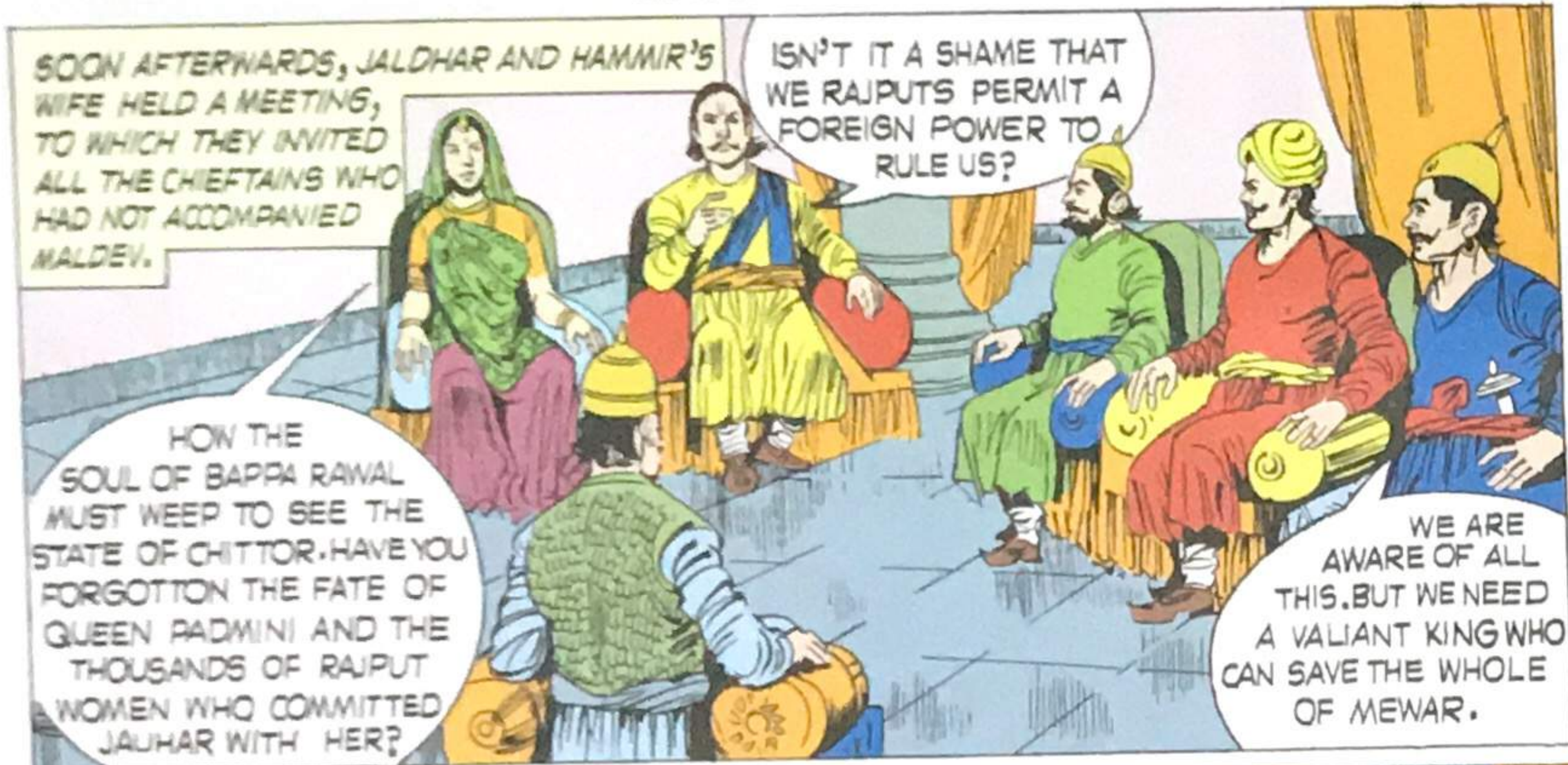
SEND HIM IN.





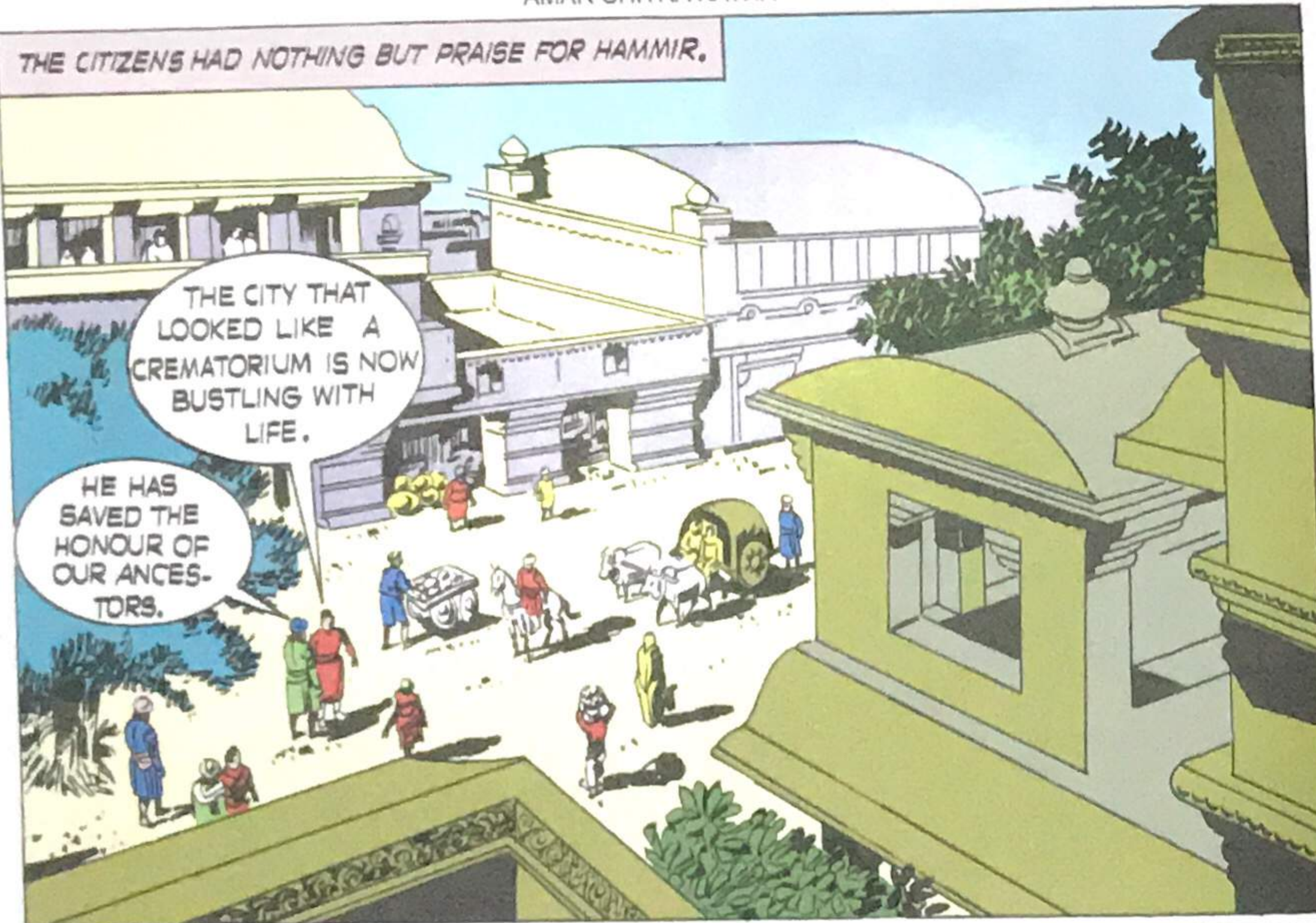
WHILE MALDEV WITH HIS CHIEFTAINS, WAS AWAY ON HIS CAMPAIGN, HAMMIR'S WIFE ACCOMPANIED BY JALDHAR, REACHED CHITTOR.





* WHO HAD SUCCEEDED ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI.

THE CITIZENS HAD NOTHING BUT PRAISE FOR HAMMIR.



ALL THE PETTY PRINCES OF THE TERRITORIES NEAR CHITTOR ACCEPTED HAMMIR AS THEIR OVERLORD. THEN SUDDENLY ONE DAY—

MY LORD, MALDEV IS ON HIS WAY WITH THE ARMIES OF THE SULTAN.



SELFISH MEN LIKE MALDEV MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON.



ALL THE PRINCES RALLIED ROUND TO MEET THE ATTACK.

MALDEV IS APPROACHING FROM THE EASTERN HILL RANGES.

AND THE SULTAN HAS CAMPED AT SINGOWLI.

THAT MEANS WE WILL FIRST HAVE TO TACKLE MALDEV AND HIS MEN.



MEANWHILE MALDEV WAS MAKING HIS OWN PLANS.

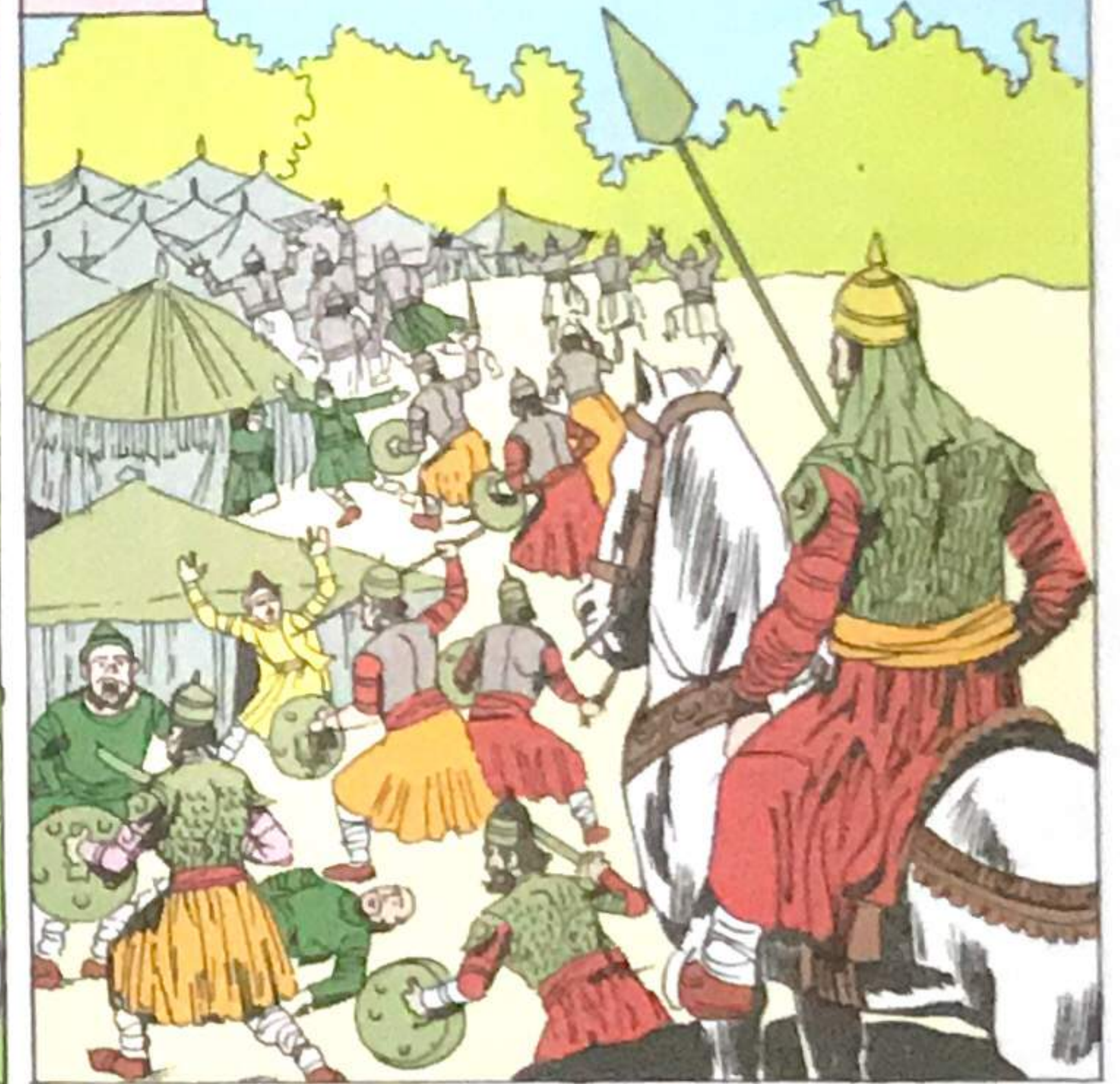
VANVEER, WE WILL PROCEED AND ATTACK THE REAR GUARD. THE SULTAN, MEANWHILE, WILL ATTACK FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE.

BUT FATHER, IT IS NOT AS EASY AS YOU THINK. HAMMIR'S SPIES MUST HAVE INFORMED HIM OF OUR POSITIONS.

HE'S RIGHT, FATHER! WE MUST THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE WE MAKE ANY MOVE.



AT THAT MOMENT, HAMMIR ATTACKED. MALDEV'S MEN WERE SWEEPED OFF THEIR FEET. HIS SECOND SON WAS KILLED.



AT MID-NIGHT, HAMMIR ATTACKED THE SULTAN'S CAMP AND CAUSED A STAMPEDE. IN THE CONFUSION THAT FOLLOWED, MANY OF THE SULTAN'S SOLDIERS KILLED ONE ANOTHER.



THE SULTAN WAS TAKEN PRISONER.



THREE MONTHS LATER —

ALL RIGHT, HAMMIR, YOU WIN. I SHALL CEDE THE TERRITORIES OF AJMER, RANTHAMBOR, NAGORE AND SHIVPURA.

THEN YOU MAY RETURN TO DELHI.

WHEN THE SULTAN'S CHAINS WERE REMOVED —

YOU MUST HAVE HAD A HARD TIME IN PRISON. I AM SORRY ABOUT IT.

IN FACT, I WAS TREATED WELL FOR A HATED ENEMY.

THE SULTAN RETURNED TO DELHI, AND IN CHITTOR IT WAS ALL PEACE AND QUIET.

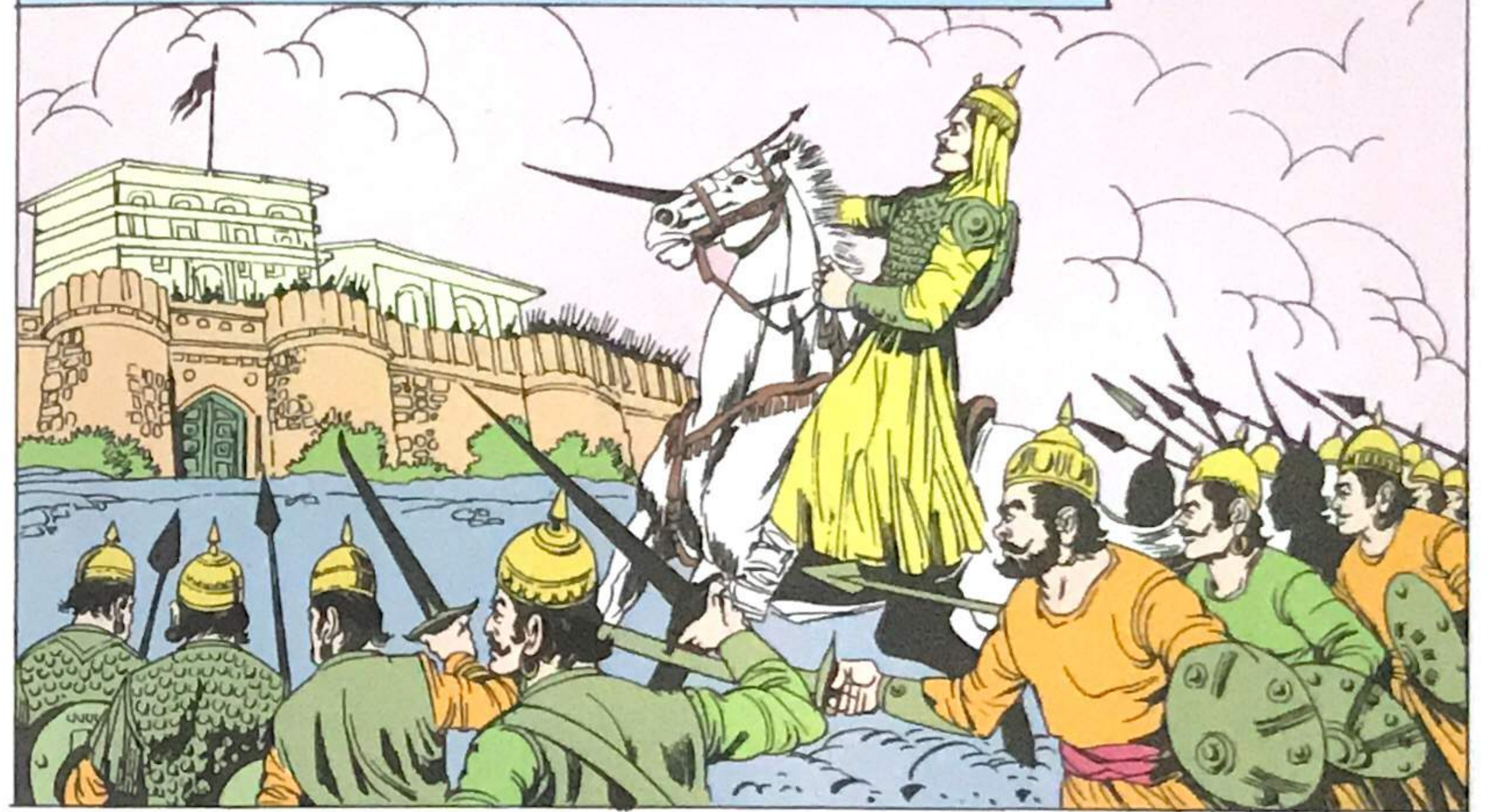
I HAVE DONE MY DUTY. I HAVE SAVED THE HONOUR OF MY FOREFATHERS. O MOTHERLAND, GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO GUARD YOU AS LONG AS I LIVE.

AS HAMMIR MUSED IN THIS WAY WHO SHOULD COME TO SEE HIM BUT VANVEER. AT LAST, HE TOO HAD DECIDED TO ACCEPT HAMMIR'S SUPREMACY.

YOU ARE NOT MY ENEMY AND I DON'T HAVE TO FORGIVE YOU. YOU SHALL RULE OVER NEEMUCH, JEERAN AND RATANPUR.

I WAS WRONG. PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

VANVEER WAS OVERWHELMED BY HAMMIR'S NOBLE BEHAVIOUR. TO SHOW HIS GRATITUDE, HE INVADED BHINSAROR AND BROUGHT IT UNDER THE REGIME OF MEWAR.



BHINSAROR IS YOURS. A SMALL TRIBUTE. BUT THERE WILL BE MANY MORE.

VANVEER!

HAMMIR WAS TOUCHED BY HIS DEVOTION.

I AM GLAD THAT CHITTOR IS FULL OF HEROES LIKE YOU.

I AM ONLY YOUR SERVANT.

SO DID HAMMIR WITH A HANDFUL OF MEN ESTABLISH A POWERFUL UNITED KINGDOM, AND PROVE THE TRUTH OF THE WORDS OF HIS UNCLE, AJAY SINGH — "TO WIN A WAR ONE NEEDS BRAIN AND NOT BRAWN."